



Bitterroot National Forest

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Fire Restrictions on Bitterroot NF Further Reduced"

Hamilton, Montana, September 18, 2007 — The area on the Bitterroot National Forest closed due to the Rat Creek Fire was reopened for public use as of 6:00 am on Wednesday, September 19th. Closures on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest remain in place until further notice.

In addition, the Bitterroot National Forest will move from Stage II to Stage I level fire restrictions on Thursday, September 20th at 1 minute after midnight. Campfires and the use of charcoal briquettes will be allowed in designated recreation sites and campgrounds, and only in concrete or metal fire rings or metal grills provided at the site. Fires in rock fire rings are not permitted. In addition to the campfire restrictions, smoking is permitted only inside buildings, vehicles, developed recreation sites, or within three foot diameter areas cleared of burnable vegetation. For additional details about the closures, please call one of the Forest's offices or visit the Bitterroot National Forest's website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/>.

Detailed information about the modified closure around Rombo is available at the Forest's offices and on the website. In general, the closure runs from Porcupine Saddle northwest around the Fire Creek drainage then southwest around the upper end of Base Creek to Wiles Peak, south-southeast to Overwhich Creek, northeast along Straight and Colter Creeks then north back to Porcupine Saddle.

The **Bad News Camp** fire, which was started by lightning last Friday, was declared out on Monday. The **More Bad News** fire continues to smolder but is not burning actively. Both are located in the Skalkaho-Rye area.

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